

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1 December 1964

AMC BRIEFING

SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

I. Outcome of General Ninh

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- a. Immediate cause of action presumably Ninh's statement to press he would return Saigon whatever Gao Dai's decision may be.
- b. Terms of dismissal decree, charging Ninh with disobedience, indicate Gao Dai abandoning earlier equivocal stand.

II. Army-government reconciliation will not result automatically, Ninh capable of causing further trouble.

- a. Once stated he would oppose Diem politically if fired.
- b. Recently boasted he could carry out coup from Paris by telegram.
- c. Reportedly had systematically begun putting his own men in as unit commanders before leaving for Paris.
- d. Tension within army still high despite smoothing over of recent pro-Diem demonstration.
- e. Generally Ely recently voiced suspicion that acting chief of staff Vy had sworn loyalty to Ninh; expressed fear Diem-Ninh feud might be replaced by Diem-Vy dispute.

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e. Vy does in fact lack Diem's confidence.

III. Actually, Ninh is political lightweight, but French backing could offset this.

- A. French officials who have backed Ninh could switch to other anti-Diem champions.
- B. French army officers have vested interest in continuance of anti-Diem feeling in Army, since Diem favors US takeover of training responsibility.
- C. Recent official French broadcast from Saigon criticized Diem, warned Viets against "heavy hand" of US. Vietnam army radio, ^{(FOLLOWED SAME LINE UNTIL} ~~before and since~~ ^{DISMISSAL OF} ~~Ninh's departure, has followed same line.~~

IV. Meanwhile, Viet Minh making capital of chaos in south.

~~radio criticism of Diem as instance of US bolstering of unpopular government.~~

- B. Viet Minh continuing to consolidate shadow government over much of southern Vietnam ~~despite further troop movements.~~

~~NEW MATERIAL ON CARDS~~